24 Epidemic Franklin Co. Pa. NO. 11

D. Chapin

Epidemic, Franklin County, Penns.

Nich: B. Lane

Nov. 12th 1821

48 Hill St. - Mr Rowan -

Nich: B. Lane - Penns.

admitted March 9th 1822

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An account of an Epidemic, which prevailed in Franklin County, Pa. in 1821, by Nicholas B. Lane.

The disease was more particularly observed near to Chambersburg, a small town, situated on elevated ground at the confluence of the Falling Spring with East Conococheague creek. It is the capital of Franklin County, and lies between the North and South Mountains. The country surrounding it is fertile and well cultivated, and is generally healthy.

During the last winter, the weather was extremely cold. The country was generally free from disease, with the exception of some cases of Inflammatory fever, and Pneumonia Typhoides. The spring was rather backward, being wet and cold and the atmosphere very foggy. Summer commenced, as usual, with variable temperature, some days were excessively warm while others were cool. There were no Rains of any consequence untill harvest, when they were slight, & continued only for a day or two; indeed the drought

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was so great in the early part of this season, that vegetation suffered considerably.

During all this time, the country was remarkably healthy, and continued so untill about the middle of July, when there occured a few cases of Dysentery, which were very obstinate - this disease, however, soon disappeared, and gave place to the epidemic, the subject of this essay.

This disease was distinguished by the following symptoms: Dullness, languor, lassitude, pains in the bones, sickness of stomach, coldness, a creeping sensation along the back, and pain in the side; the tongue was natural, vomiting sometimes appeared in the first stage and the bowels were costive; skin was dry, shrivelled, & cold.

These symptoms were soon followed by the fever, during which the pulse was not very full, but quick and frequent, the skin very hot and dry and the fever high, often continuing for twenty four hours; the tongue was parched and furred in the middle and of a brown colour; the thirst was excessive & on

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taking drink, it was frequently rejected; the bowels were torpid; the eye wild, and sometimes fixed and dull; the countenance gloomy and clouded; great debility & inclination to sleep prevailed, with the mind often delirious and the respiration anxious and uneasy.

The third stage commenced sometimes in twelve, and often not till twenty four hours had elapsed. The perspiration was sometimes free, at others cold & clammy; in general appearing partially and imperfectly over the surface.

The patients frequently complained of illness for several days, sometimes they were taken suddenly after slight exercise, and were attacked equally in the day & night.

The disease assumed the Intermittent, Remittent, and Continued type; it first appeared in the quotidian, tertian, quartan, and double tertian form, and its type was sometimes characterised by coma, and convulsions of an Hysterical and Epileptic character.

The disease was generally tertian, in its type, pursuing this form throughout its whole continuance, sometimes

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varying, becoming quartan, quotidian, and very often remittent; the changes sometimes were sudden, and not unfrequently protracted and slow, before they exhibited the symptoms of the new type; the intermissions were feverish and short, consisting only of a few hours when the medicine could be given. The paroxysm would often cease in the evening; and it was necessary to exhibit the medicine during the night, to obviate the attack of the succeeding day.

This disease first appeared in the neighborhood of Chambersburg, about the latter part of July, became considerable in August, gained its height in September, and terminated in the latter end of October.

It was general; whole families were confined at once. It did not, however, prove mortal; there were but few deaths, and those which did occur, took place after the third paroxysm, in the soporose form of the disease, or after relapses, which were frequent, occurring three or four times in the same person, and produced by the slightest exposure. In other parts of the county, for instance in

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The [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to the Intermittent type. The Sensations [illegible] characterized by sighing, yawning, great anxiety, pain in the head and back, heat over the whole body, great thirst, difficulty of breathing and [illegible] of [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] attack [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] a little [illegible], nausea and vomiting, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] suffered [illegible] in the treatment from the Intermittent variety. [illegible], Cathartics, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] as soon as the fever intermitted, [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] administer [illegible] the bark. The [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] then, and in these cases the disease [illegible] [illegible].

The continued type comes on with the usual symptoms [illegible] in the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] continues over the whole neck, [illegible] of the limbs and [illegible] of the body,

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Epistaxis was frequent in this epidemic, and was not confined to any particular type, showing that the head was much affected; astringent solutions drawn up into the nostrils were used without benefit, and in consequence of previous debility of the system, bloodletting was considered as hazardous; the application of a blister to the back part of the neck, generally relieved it.

This epidemic was greatly increased by the heat of the weather: sometime in the month of October, rain fell & lasted for several days, after which it became cool. There occurred but few cases during its continuance; warm weather succeeded; after which, many people were attacked, and a great many relapses occurred.

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Town of Fred. Cty. Va

National Female
at
Fredericksburg Va

James Cooke

admitted March 12th - 1822